

## News Release

# Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing retains title winning team and drivers for TCR World Tour season

- Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing has revealed the line-up of team and two drivers that will compete in this year's inaugural TCR World Tour
- BRC Hyundai N Squadra Corse will field a pair of Hyundai Elantra N TCR for Mikel Azcona and Norbert Michelisz – the same combination that won the WTCR title double in 2022
- The team and drivers have completed several days of pre-season testing in preparation for the start of the new series, which begins at the Portimão circuit in Portugal.

**Dubai, April 18, 2023** – Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing drivers Mikel Azcona and Norbert Michelisz will reunite with the WTCR – FIA World Touring Car Cup winning BRC Hyundai N Squadra Corse and the Hyundai Elantra N TCR to contest the first season of the TCR World Tour.

The combination will head to new circuits and countries among a host of novel challenges for 2023. At each stop on the World Tour calendar, the Hyundai Motorsport customer team will be on track alongside their counterparts racing for points in an established – and very competitive – regional or national TCR championship.

The season starts with four stops in Europe – joining TCR Europe on three occasions, with the June weekend at Vallelunga acting as a non-championship round for TCR Italy. Back-to-back weekends follow, with two races each in South America and Australia, in August and November respectively before the World Tour ends on the Macau Guia Circuit as the event welcomes back international Touring Car racing for the first time since 2019 as part of TCR Asia Challenge.

The list of events features some of the most well-known circuits in the world, including Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium, and the famed Mount Panorama Circuit at Bathurst, where the penultimate World Tour date will join the TCR Australia season finale for what is certain to be an exciting weekend. The new venues are just some of the new challenges facing the team and drivers this season. Each new TCR championship the World Tour joins will present the international competitors with a new weekend format, while the

understanding the Kuhmo tyres supplied for the season has been one of the key focuses of the team's testing in preparation for the season.

The match-up of Michelisz, Azcona, BRC Hyundai N Squadra Corse and the Hyundai Elantra N comes off the back of an excellent final year of WTCR competition in 2022, which included five race wins and ended with the titles for the Cherasco-based squad and Azcona, in his first campaign at the wheel of a Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing-built car.

Across the five seasons of WTCR, BRC Hyundai N Squadra Corse drivers won three individual titles – one each for Michelisz, Azcona and Gabriele Tarquini, who continues in the Team Manager role for 2023, as well as the 2022 teams' crown. Hyundai Motorsport customers also won both titles in 2018, the first year of WTCR. The aim is now to begin the new era of international TCR racing with the same immediate success.

Hyundai Motorsport President Sean Kim said: "TCR World Tour is a fantastic opportunity for us to showcase the N Brand and Hyundai Motorsport on a global stage. The start of our TCR project in 2017 was a key strategic decision, as it brought Hyundai Motorsport into circuit racing for the first

time and supported the introduction of the first road cars in the N range the same year. The profile of both our TCR project and the N range have both risen greatly since then. A huge part of this has been because of the incredible record of Hyundai Motorsport customers with the Hyundai Elantra N TCR and i30 N TCR in WTCR, where they have won five titles over the five years of the series. The importance of showing the performance of Hyundai Motorsport cars and representing the N brand at the top level of TCR competition remains in 2023 with the start of the TCR World Tour, and I am sure we will have more victories to celebrate this year."

Hyundai Motorsport Team Principal Cyril Abiteboul said: "BRC Hyundai N Squadra Corse, Mikel Azcona and Norbert Michelisz have already proven themselves to be a winning combination, so we're obviously very happy to have both drivers and the team representing Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing again for the first season of the TCR World Tour. The Customer Racing department have customers in many of the championships the new global series will visit, and the arrival of BRC Hyundai N Squadra Corse, Mikel Azcona and Norbert Michelisz will only increase the profile of Hyundai Motorsport teams in these nations. We have seen many times in different series that the Hyundai Elantra N TCR is a very strong package, even at the highest level of the category. I'm confident that 2023 will add to list of successes for Hyundai Motorsport-built cars."

Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing Manager Andrea Cisotti said: "TCR World Tour has many steps into the unknown, however, we begin this journey as well prepared as we can be. We continue with BRC Hyundai N Squadra Corse, who have been integral to the superb record of Hyundai Motorsport cars at the top of TCR racing with WTCR race wins from the Hyundai i30 N TCR and Elantra N TCR. We have two of the best touring car drivers with Mikel Azcona and Norbert Michelisz. We also have the benefit of continuity as we look to the challenges of new tyres and new tracks as we join national and regional TCR series. There is a lot of homework to be done and we have been busy testing in Portimão and Spa-Francorchamps with a key focus on understanding how best to use the Kuhmo tyres. We are confident that we are well prepared to embark on this exciting new adventure."

Mikel Azcona said: "I'm really happy to continue with Hyundai Motorsport Customer Racing and BRC Hyundai N Squadra Corse for a second season. When I joined the team for 2022 it was a great opportunity, and now we have another one with the beginning of the TCR World Tour. Last year we proved that me, Norbert and the team worked very well together when we won both titles and I think we are only stronger at the start of this season

with Hyundai Elantra N TCR. With the preparation done, I think we have a great chance to race for the titles again and add to the success we had last year.”

Norbert Michelisz said: “As the first season of TCR World Tour this year is really exciting. A lot of things are changing and in good ways. We know that Mikel and I are very strong, and we know that the Hyundai Elantra N TCR is a great car. However, there are lots of questions which we will only find the answer to when we start racing in Portugal. All of these unknowns – the new tracks, the new tyres, racing with teams in the regional TCR series – mean that the driver who will win the title will be the one who adapts to these things the fastest. I can’t wait!”

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### About Hyundai Motor Company

Established in 1967, Hyundai Motor Company is present in over 200 countries with more than 120,000 employees dedicated to tackling real-world mobility challenges around the globe.

Based on the brand vision ‘Progress for Humanity,’ Hyundai Motor is accelerating its transformation into a Smart Mobility Solution Provider.

The company invests in advanced technologies such as robotics and Urban Air Mobility (UAM) to bring about revolutionary mobility solutions, while pursuing open innovation to introduce future mobility services.

In pursuit of sustainable future for the world, Hyundai will continue its efforts to introduce zero emission vehicles equipped with industry-leading hydrogen fuel cell and EV technologies.

More information about Hyundai Motor and its products can be found at: <http://worldwide.hyundai.com> or <http://globalpr.hyundai.com>

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